

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY SEPTEMBER 3, 2013

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE—2013–14 REGULAR SESSION

Assembly Concurrent Resolution

No. 77

Introduced by Assembly Member Bonta

(Coauthors: Assembly Members Chau, Fong, Muratsuchi, Pan, Ting, Williams, ~~and Yamada~~ *Yamada, Achadjian, Alejo, Allen, Ammiano, Atkins, Bigelow, Bloom, Bocanegra, Bonilla, Bradford, Brown, Buchanan, Ian Calderon, Campos, Chesbro, Conway, Cooley, Dahle, Daly, Dickinson, Donnelly, Eggman, Fox, Frazier, Beth Gaines, Garcia, Gatto, Gomez, Gonzalez, Gordon, Gorell, Grove, Hagman, Harkey, Roger Hernández, Holden, Jones, Jones-Sawyer, Levine, Linder, Logue, Lowenthal, Maienschein, Medina, Melendez, Mitchell, Morrell, Mullin, Nazarian, Nestande, Olsen, Patterson, Perea, John A. Pérez, V. Manuel Pérez, Quirk, Quirk-Silva, Rendon, Salas, Skinner, Stone, Wagner, Waldron, Weber, Wieckowski, and Wilk*)

(Coauthors: Senators Lieu, Liu, and Yee)

August 19, 2013

Assembly Concurrent Resolution No. 77—Relative to Filipino American History Month.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

ACR 77, as amended, Bonta. Filipino American History Month.

This measure would recognize the month of October 2013 as Filipino American History Month and the 426th anniversary of the first presence of Filipinos in the continental United States.

Fiscal committee: no.

1 WHEREAS, Filipinos and Filipino Americans have been
2 contributing to California and the United States for hundreds of
3 years, ever since October 18, 1587, when the first “Luzones Indios”
4 set foot in Morro Bay, California, on board the Nuestra Señora de
5 Esperanza, a Manila-built galleon ship captained by Pedro de
6 Unamuno of Spain; and

7 WHEREAS, In the late 1700s and early 1800s, Filipinos helped
8 Father Junípero Serra establish the California mission system; and

9 WHEREAS, Since the late 1800s, Filipino communities have
10 existed in southern Louisiana, according to oral histories recorded
11 by Rhonda Richoux Fox; and

12 WHEREAS, After the Philippines was colonized, Filipinos
13 began immigrating to San Francisco, where they contributed to
14 the city both as military personnel and as service sector workers
15 such as bellhops, dishwashers, servants, and cooks; established,
16 by the 1920s, a thriving community around Kearny and Jackson
17 Streets, which became known as “Manilatown;” and settled, during
18 the post World War II era, into the Fillmore, South of Market, and
19 Excelsior districts; and

20 WHEREAS, Between 1906 and 1935, the first large wave of
21 Filipino immigration to the United States began, as Filipinos were
22 recruited to California, Alaska, and Hawaii to work in the
23 agricultural industries, canneries, and sugarcane plantations,
24 respectively; and

25 WHEREAS, The Filipino contract workers in Hawaii, or
26 “Sakadas,” became the largest group of Asians on the sugarcane
27 plantations by the 1920s; and

28 WHEREAS, At the turn of the 20th century, Filipino students,
29 or “pensionados,” farm workers, and laborers in manufacturing
30 and in the service sector began settling in Stockton and the
31 surrounding San Joaquin Delta area, where they built a community
32 that became the largest concentration of Filipinos outside of the
33 Philippines and established a thriving six-block ethnic
34 neighborhood that became known as “Little Manila”; and

35 WHEREAS, In 2000, the Stockton City Council designated this
36 area, in downtown Stockton at the intersection of Lafayette and
37 El Dorado Streets, as the “Little Manila Historical Site,” the first
38 designation of this kind in the country; and

39 WHEREAS, In the first decades of the 20th century, thousands
40 of Filipinos in California worked in agricultural fields throughout

1 the state, in cities and regions such as the Sacramento-San Joaquin
2 Delta, the central coast, Imperial Valley, Orange County, the Inland
3 Empire, Delano, Bakersfield, Coachella Valley, and the San
4 Francisco Bay area, and became a critical element in the growth
5 and political economy of the state, often enduring harsh labor
6 conditions and poor wages, but persevering and creating a strong
7 legacy of mutual support, strikes, and organization for farm labor
8 unionization; and

9 WHEREAS, In the 1920s, Filipinos in California also worked
10 as laborers in the shipyards of Vallejo, where they established a
11 Filipino American community and business center, and became
12 so successful that there were thousands of Filipinos working as
13 shipbuilders by the start of World War II; and

14 WHEREAS, During World War II, approximately 200,000
15 Filipino soldiers battled under the command of the United States
16 to preserve the liberty of our country and win back the liberty of
17 the Philippines from the Japanese occupation; and

18 WHEREAS, Thousands of these Filipino soldiers came from
19 California, served in the First and Second Filipino Infantry
20 Regiments, underwent training at Salinas and at Fort Ord,
21 California, and were stationed at Camp Beale near Sacramento
22 and Camp Cooke near Santa Maria; and

23 WHEREAS, After World War II ended, many Filipinos who
24 had served in the United States Navy settled in National City and
25 elsewhere in the County of San Diego, as well as in the Cities of
26 West Long Beach and Wilmington, where they worked in the Long
27 Beach shipyards and Terminal Island canneries, served in the
28 harbor area as nurses and medical workers, and created flourishing
29 Filipino American communities numbering in the tens of
30 thousands; and

31 WHEREAS, Between 1941 and 1959, the second wave of
32 Filipino immigration to the United States began, as nurses, students,
33 “war brides” and fiancées of World War II military personnel and
34 veterans, tourists, and Filipino members of the United States Navy
35 came to the United States; and

36 WHEREAS, In 1965, the third wave of Filipino immigration to
37 the United States began, as the passing of the Immigration and
38 Nationality Act abolished “national origins” as the basis for
39 immigration, allowing for more immigration from Asia and Latin

1 America and for much-needed Filipino medical professionals to
2 come to the United States to fill United States labor shortages; and

3 WHEREAS, On September 8, 1965, Filipino American
4 agricultural labor leaders, including Larry Itliong and Philip Vera
5 Cruz, organized more than 1500 farm workers from the
6 Agricultural Workers Organizing Committee in the Delano Grape
7 Strike of 1965, in partnership with César Chávez, Dolores Huerta,
8 and other Mexican American labor leaders of the National Farm
9 Workers Association, sparking one of the greatest social, economic,
10 and racial justice movements in the history of California and the
11 United States, and led to the establishment of the United Farm
12 Workers of America; and

13 WHEREAS, These agricultural workers, along with other
14 volunteers, also built Agbayani Village, a retirement facility for
15 elderly Filipino farmworkers, or “Manongs,” located at Forty Acres
16 in Delano in the County of Kern; and

17 WHEREAS, In 1968, Filipino student organizers were
18 instrumental in the leadership of the Third World Liberation Front
19 that led to the founding of our nation’s first Third World College
20 at the University of California, Berkeley, and the first College of
21 Ethnic Studies, at California State University, San Francisco, that
22 was part of the larger effort to democratize higher education for
23 all; and

24 WHEREAS, From 1968 to 1977, Filipino American activists
25 and residents of San Francisco’s International Hotel organized a
26 popular, multiracial campaign that challenged local authorities and
27 private development to place people and the public good ahead of
28 profit, and support affordable housing for Filipino and Chinese
29 immigrants and community members; and

30 WHEREAS, From 1972 to 1986, Filipino American activists
31 organized massive educational and political campaigns to restore
32 civil liberties in the Philippines during the period of martial law
33 in that country, creating dynamic local responses to international
34 politics and placing pressure on the United States government to
35 end its support of the Marcos dictatorship; and

36 WHEREAS, In 1973, the fourth wave of Filipino immigration
37 to the United States began, as political exiles and refugees from
38 the Marcos era, intellectuals, tourists, students, student activists,
39 professionals, semiprofessionals, and families came to the United
40 States; and

1 WHEREAS, In 2002, the City of Los Angeles, home to over
2 120,000 Filipinos, designated part of the city as the “Historic
3 Filipinotown” district, the largest designation of this kind in the
4 country; and

5 WHEREAS, The Filipino Community Center of the Los Angeles
6 Harbor area in the City of Wilmington continues to serve as a
7 model organization, facilitating community events such as
8 weddings, baptisms, pageants, and fiestas; and

9 WHEREAS, Today, numerous other community-based
10 institutions that take responsibility for the services, advocacy, and
11 civic engagement needs of the Filipino American community exist
12 throughout the state; and

13 WHEREAS, The Filipino American population is currently the
14 largest Asian American and Pacific Islander group in California
15 and the third largest Asian American and Pacific Islander group
16 in the United States; and

17 WHEREAS, Nine Filipino Americans have received the
18 Congressional Medal of Honor, the highest award for valor in
19 action against an enemy force that can be bestowed upon an
20 individual serving in the United States Armed Forces; and

21 WHEREAS, Filipino Americans have served the public in a
22 wide range of capacities, including, but not limited to, Chief Justice
23 of the California Supreme Court, representatives to the United
24 States Congress, legislators in the state legislatures of California
25 and other states, and other city, state, and federal leaders of the
26 United States; and

27 WHEREAS, Throughout the history of the United States,
28 Filipino Americans have made cultural, economic, political, social,
29 and other contributions to our country that have become an
30 important part of the fabric that keeps the American people unified;
31 and

32 WHEREAS, Since World War II, federal, state, and local
33 redevelopment projects, freeway and highway construction, urban
34 decay, private development, demographic shifts, and poor city
35 planning have destroyed a significant number of Filipino American
36 historic sites and ethnic neighborhoods, and many of the remaining
37 Filipino American communities and historic sites are in danger of
38 being lost; and

39 WHEREAS, Preserving our Filipino communities throughout
40 California and the United States is critical to the preservation of

1 Filipino culture, history, traditions, and heritage and to the
2 preservation of our state and national history as well as our state
3 and national future; now, therefore, be it

4 *Resolved by the Assembly of the State of California, the Senate*
5 *thereof concurring*, That the Legislature recognizes the month of
6 October 2013 as Filipino American History Month and the 426th
7 anniversary of the first presence of Filipinos in the continental
8 United States; and be it further

9 *Resolved*, That the Chief Clerk of the Assembly transmit copies
10 of this resolution to the author for appropriate distribution.